

Pegasos Update

Another month, another meeting, and life rolls along. Recently I've been work feverishly (by my standards, anyway) on re-mastering much of my old collection of Amiga animations. I had once converted many of them to MPEG for CD-ROM distribution, and now I'm reworking them again with a higher level of quality for DVD, hopefully playable on any DVD player. I've been combining the strengths of my Amiga and Mac on this project, and like the CD project before, my spare desktop A4000 has been getting a workout shuffling ANIM files, frames, and files. If I'm lucky (and more skilled at this job than I think I am), I should have something to show in a month or so.

In the world of my Pegasos, I have been playing games recently. Shortly after OpenGL support had been added to MorphOS, a Morph port of Id Software's game Quake 3 showed up as well. I downloaded it at the time, but wasn't able to do much with it, as it requires the data files from a bona fide copy of the game, which had been out of circulation for a while, as Doom 3 and Quake 4 have taken the spotlight. I couldn't find a copy of Quake 3, and didn't have the available bandwidth to steal one (which is wrong, of course, but this was for science or something). Recently, however, Quake 3 has been rereleased as a budget game, under the title "Quake 3 Gold,"

which contains both Quake 3 Arena, and Quake 3 Team Arena. If anyone is interested, I recommend you go to a nearby Wal-Mart with ten bucks in your pocket, and thumb through the budget software rack. I needed the help of V.P. Mike Barclay (and his Road Runner connection) to do a proper installation, as the install script needs to download another 30 megs of data to get Quake 3 for Morph on its feet. Not surprisingly for a PC game, Quake 3 is very resource heavy, taking up at least half a gigabyte of hard drive space, and requiring a video card with 3D acceleration supported by TinyGL. Back when it was originally sold, Quake 3 was one of the earliest games to take the then-controversial position of requiring a 3D video card to play, and offering no other option, though the requirements on the back of the package seem quite modest compared to what most PC games seem to want today. After some pains getting it running, I am most impressed to learn a little more of what my Pegasos II was capable of doing.

From a graphical standpoint, Quake 3 is probably the most impressive thing I have ever seen my Pegasos do, even if the video card may be doing more heavy lifting than the CPU. I have shown the first Quake game around meetings in the past, both the software-based and the GL-based version, and I can safely say this seems as far beyond it as a Playstation is beyond a Colecovision. A hyper-gamer will probably be happy to tell you how dated the half-decade-old game graphic engine is, but it doesn't look it to me. The 3D

visuals are varied and detailed, and move smoothly even at resolutions of 1024x768 or higher (and my Radeon 7000 card was hardly state of the art when I bought it). The action can get a little slow or choppy if there's a lot of transparent effects, such as the smoke trails from rockets, but the overall impression is very favorable, and definitely moves into the territory where you stop thinking about polygons or frames-per-second.

If you are used to playing the first Quake, Quake 3 is rather different, because even the one-player game is based on the multiplayer death-match modes. Basically, instead of fighting your way from one end of the level to the other, You have to kill every other player in the game (all computer controlled AI in a one-player game) as many times as possible, and faster than anyone else. Each level has a set number of "frags," and whoever reaches it first wins the round. Naturally there are strategy and tactics involved, but in practice it's all very frenetic, and you either hold your own, or flounder like a kid trying to get out of a swimming pool with someone waiting on the edge to push him back in. There are several different difficulty levels, but even the lowest one isn't exactly a picnic. There are also several multi-player modes, to be played over a local network or the internet, but I haven't had much opportunity to try that since my Pegasos has been off the net for a good while. I've run into an occasional bug or stability problem, but given their infrequency and the overall leap in gaming capacity seen

here, I can let it slide. There are also resources on the web for modifications or different player models, which I have experimented with. Someday a multiplayer game with the Doom marine fighting a bikini model, Homer Simpson, and a worm (from the game "Worms") will be a reality, and you'll see it at an upcoming meeting. For now however, I will show off the one-player experience at the next meeting. Hopefully it will be impressive.

...Eric Schwartz

AmiTech-Dayton Gazette, May 2006

AmigaOne CPU Modules

23 April, 2006

ACK Software Controls, Inc. is pleased to announce the upcoming availability of two new AmigaOne XE CPU modules. The first CPU module will be equipped with a Freescale MC7448 CPU clocked at 1GHz. The 1GHz module will retail for \$500.00 US Dollars. The second CPU module will be equipped with a Freescale MC7448 clocked at 1.7GHz will retail for \$850.00 US Dollars. Both CPU modules will be equipped with a high-quality heatsink and fan to ensure quiet, reliable operation.

Prototype modules will be demonstrated May 22, 2006.

AmigaMCCC News

MCCC

P.O. Box 813

Bedford, Texas 76095

<http://www.amigamccc.org>

June Calendar

June 12 — Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
7:00 pm — Grand Prairie Public Library
901 Conover Drive, Grand Prairie

June 12 — MCCC Board of Director's Meeting
Approx. 9:15 pm — Location TBD

June 24 — Newsletter Deadline — 7:00 am

The location for this demonstration has yet to be determined. Due to the low volume nature of these products, emails indicating demand for either of the two units is greatly appreciated. Stay tuned for updates.

Estimated Availability June 19/2006

If interested, send mail to: a.kowalczyk@sympatico.ca